



Germany: Facts & Figures August 2009

A monthly overview of current opinion data and statistical information in the Federal Republic of Germany

Politics

If Bundestag elections would have been held on August 30, the CDU/CSU would have received 37% of the vote, the SPD 22%, the Green Party 12%, the FDP 13%, the Left Party 10%, and all other parties combined 6%. (Forsa. 08/26/09)

State Parliament Elections

Thuringia: CDU 31.2% (down 11.8% compared to the figures four years ago), SPD 18.5% (up 4.0%), the Left Party 27.4% (up 1.3%), the FDP 7.6% (up 4.0%), and the Green Party 6.2% (up 1.7%). The extremist right-wing NPD did not manage to jump the five percent hurdle. The voter turnout was 55.5% (up 3.2 %).

Saxony: CDU 40% (down 1% compared to the figures from four years ago), the SPD reached 10.1% (up 0.3%), the Left Party 21% (down 2.6%), the FDP 10.1% (up 4.2%), the Green Party 6.1% (up 1%), and the NPD 5.7% (down 3.5%). The voter turnout dropped from 59.6% in 2005 to 51.9% in 2009.

Saarland: CDU 34.5% (down 13%), the SPD 25% (down 5.8%), the Left Party reached 21.0% (up 18.7%), the FDP 9.5% (up 4.3%), and the Green Party 5.5% (down 0.1%). The voter turnout was 67.5% (up 12%).

Educational policy is the top issue for parents in the Bundestag election campaign. For 62% of parents, education and family issues play as important a role as the fight against the economic crisis, for 24%, they play an even more important role. Ninety-one percent of parents advocate a uniform national education system and 51% said that they would favor private over state schools. Two-thirds supported investments in education and child and day care facilities instead of direct payments to parents. (Forsa. Major papers, 08/10/09)

Seventy-seven percent of Germans aged 18-29 are going online to find out what Germany's political parties are promising before elections. For the overall population, this figure drops to 45%. Most young users get campaign news from Web sites run by newspapers and magazines, and are increasingly using social networks such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter. Twenty-eight percent of Germans aged 18-29 use social networks for campaign information, and 22% read election blogs. (Forsa. Major papers, 08/20/09)

Economy

All papers reported that the economy grew unexpectedly in the second quarter of this year. When adjusted for price, seasonal, and calendar variations, the Gross Domestic Product rose 0.3% over the previous quarter, thus ending the worst recession since WW II. But despite the positive news, the economy is still expected to shrink sharply for the full year 2009. GDP was down 7.1% in the second quarter of 2009 compared to the same quarter a year earlier. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 08/14/09)

The total number of air passengers departing from German airports in the period from January to June 2009 amounted to 42.6 million and dropped by 7.9% which reflects a reduced volume of 3.6 million passengers. Inland traffic (11.6 million) saw a decrease of 7.6%, passengers travelling to foreign destinations (31.0 million: -7.9%) showed a similar trend. The number of persons travelling to European destinations (23.9 million) decreased by 8.0%, travelers on intercontinental flights (7.1 million) went down by 7.6%. (Federal Statistical Office, 08/12/09)

Consumer prices in Germany dropped 0.5% on the year last month. The drop was triggered by a sharp year-on-year fall in energy and fuel prices which peaked in July 2008. The decline was the first since March 1987 when prices were down 0.3% on the year. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 08/12/09)

The deficit for the federal, Länder, and local governments and the social security system reached 17.3 billion euros in the first half of this year. In the first six months of 2008, Germany had reached a surplus of eight billion euros. New debt accounted for 1.5% of GDP. (Federal Statistical Office. Major papers, 08/26/09)

China took over from Germany as the world's top exporter during the first half of 2009. China exported goods worth 521.7 billion dollars in the first six months of this year, while Germany exported goods worth 521.6 billion dollars. Experts expect German exports to shrink by 18 percent this year due to the global economic crisis. (Major papers, 08/26/09)

Society

Germany has the lowest birth rate among all 27 EU countries. In 2008, the German birth rate was 8.2 babies per 1,000 inhabitants, compared to an EU average of 10.9. (Eurostat. Major papers, 08/04/09)

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